

Message Text

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12
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-11

DHA-02 SAJ-01 ACDA-05 /078 W
----- 104847

R 111430Z MAR 76
FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5878
INFO AMCONSUL ZAGREB

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BELGRADE 1586

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT SHUM YO
SUBJ: LAWYER GIVEN ONE YEAR SENTENCE

REF: (A) BELGRADE 1305 (B) BELGRADE 1390

1. LAWYER SRDJA POPOVIC WAS SENTENCED ON MAR 10 TO ONE YEAR IN PRISON FOR SPREADING "FALSE INFORMATION" DURING DEFENSE OF DISSIDENT PROFESSOR. THE JUDGE OF THE COMMUNE COURT IN VALJEVO SAID THAT POPOVIC HAD USED HIS ROLE AS DEFENSE ATTORNEY TO SPREAD "FALSE INFORMATION WITH THE INTENTION OF CAUSING ALARM AMONG THE POPULACE". THE SENTENCE CAN BE APPEALED.

2. COMMENT: POPOVIC CASE IS LIKELY TO AROUSE INTEREST IN CONGRESS. IT HAS BEEN CLOSELY FOLLOWED IN THE WESTERN PRESS AND RECEIVED ATTENTION FROM HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS LIKE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. POPOVIC'S CONVICTION IS A CONFIRMATION OF THE DANGERS OF DISSENT AS WELL AS AN ASSAULT ON THE YUGOSLAV LEGAL SYSTEM IN THAT IT BECOMES A PRECEDENT FOR PROSECUTING A LAWYER FOR WHAT HE SAYS IN COURT IN HIS CLIENT'S DEFENSE. (MIHAJLOV'S LAWYER WAS THREATENED WITH PROSECUTION BUT NO LEGAL CHARGES AGAINST HIM WERE
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MADE. SILBERMAN

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COURT DECISIONS, PRISONERS, ATTORNEYS, PENAL INSTITUTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BELGRA01586
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760094-0096
From: BELGRADE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760373/aaaadlyu.tel
Line Count: 61
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 BELGRADE 1305, 76 BELGRADE 1390
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: BoyleJA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 MAY 2004 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <13 SEP 2004 by BoyleJA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LAWYER GIVEN ONE YEAR SENTENCE
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, YO, (POPOVIC, SRDJA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006